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JUL 28 1965

'Urameton',
60, Westmeston Avenue,
Saltdean,
Nr Brighton,
Sussex,
England.

9th July, 1965.

Professor J. Lederberg,
Department of Genetics,
Stanford University School of Medicine,
Palo Alto,
California, U.S.A.

Dear Professor Lederberg,

I have recently read your article, 'Signs of Life' published in the current issue of 'Nature', 3 July 1965. I am surprised to find that you accept uncritically that evolution has occurred in biota. The evidence for this is miniscule and the fact that you should base your whole views upon it and indeed encourage people to believe that something similar has taken place on Mars is, to my mind, fatuous.

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As a geneticist you should know that genetics has supplied no conclusive evidence for evolution, that the fossil record is completely against it and that it is by and large a biological pipe-dream, although believed by the majority of scientists today in defiance of the evidence.

You are surely aware of Professor Nillson's great work, 'Synthetische Artbildung', Lund 1953, the work of Timofeeff-Ressovsky on Drosophila and Professor Kerkut's more recent work, 'Implications of Evolution', Pergamon Press, 1964. Your Point (B) on page 9 of the issue of 'Nature' is wholly untenable and if you press it you fly in face of the facts. In fact your whole

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position is summed up very aptly by Professor Nillson in the following words when he deals with the theory of emication:-

"As I have pointed out, there is no discussion among biologists today whether an evolution has taken place or not. The discussion concerns the how, the causation of evolution. No definite answer has been given to this question.

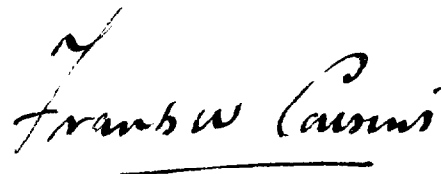
It then becomes necessary to ask: Has there really been an evolution? Are the proofs of its occurrence tenable?

After a detailed and comprehensive review of the facts we have been forced to give the answer: No! Neither a recent nor a palaeohistorical evolution can be empirically demonstrated.

If this is the case, all discussions and problems concerning the causation of an evolution lose all interest. Lamarckism or mutationism, monophyletic or polyphyletic, continuity or discontinuity - the roads of the evolution are not problems any more. It is rather futile to discuss the digestion or the brain functions of a ghost."

I would welcome your views.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Frank W. Cousins". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Frank W. Cousins